

stargazing by orphan_account

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Affection, Aged-Up Character(s), Birthday Fluff, Boys Kissing, Comfort, Cuddling & Snuggling, Domestic Fluff, F/F, First Kiss, Fluff and Humor, Fluff without Plot, Gay Will Byers, Headcanon, Laser Tag, M/M, Mike Wheeler Loves Will Byers, Post-Season/Series 03, Protective Mike Wheeler, Sleepy Cuddles, Slow Burn, byler fluff, elmax is canon fight me, got this from a pinterest post, i needed cuddles so i wrote about cuddles ok?, my baby making the first move, the byers don't move away in this one

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper/Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Will Byers/Mike Wheeler, byler - Relationship, elmax

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Summary:

Where the party goes laser tagging for Will's 16th birthday and something happens that Mike will never forget.

OR

That first kiss no one asked for.

stargazing

Author's Note:

hey guys!! sorry if this is out of character in some ways. I really wanted a wholesome fic cause my stranger things ones are always so angsty, let's just say elmax and byler can set their differences aside and coexist!! this is set after season 3, and for argument's sake here the byers didn't move ok? ok <3

kudos and comments always warm my heart :))

March 22nd, 1987

6:37 pm

"Lucas, I don't even care if it's Will's birthday, so help me if you crash this car I'm making Eleven open the gate and feed you to the Demodogs," Dustin yelled from the front seat of the Henderson's van with the rest of the group piled in the back.

"El can't do that anymore, genius." Max had her hands clasped in Eleven's lap.

"I have my *license*, Dustin. Stop freaking out," Lucas groaned but still reduced his speed by a few miles.

"*Lie-sense*?" Eleven looked to Max.

"Can we please stop arguing?" Mike hollered over the shouting from the back of the van, as well as Max's arm stretching across the console to crank the volume louder on the radio.

The party had decided to celebrate Will Byer's sixteenth birthday in the most acceptable way possible: *laser tag*. The boys had outgrown *Dungeons & Dragons*—for the most part—but that didn't stop them from pooling their money and planning on spending the night shooting each other with lasers and eating junk food like children; if anything it brought back the nostalgia of their middle school antics. The girls, on the other hand, didn't care for the game as much—although Eleven had a difficult time wrapping her head around the entire idea of laser tagging—and they only went for the sake of Will and to spend time together.

The van slowly turned into the parking lot of the laser tag center and the chatter subsided.

"Is this what you wanted for your birthday?" Mike turned to Will. The other boy gave a shy smile and nodded. No matter how many weeks since they'd announced their relationship to the party and their parents—even realizing it themselves—Will's affectionate gestures made Mike's heart beat a *little* faster, and his eyes linger on the boy's face a *little* longer. He wasn't used to it yet, he'd never been in a *real* relationship. *And his smile is driving me mad.*

Will took Mike's hand and pulled him out of the last row of seats. As he jumped down from the van Mike's eyes flickered to his shorts. Only briefly. *Were they always that..short?* His heart leapt from his chest and he looked away, embarrassed, only to find their intertwined fingers. Will caught Mike's flustered expression.

"What?" he laughed and held up their hands, "Do you want me to stop?"

"No!" Mike said, his face reddening. "Uh, I mean, you don't have to. Sorry, it's just all so *new*—"

"*Hey! Birthday boy! Get over here! You too, stupid,*" Max called, pointing to the Polaroid camera in her hands while the rest of the group huddled around the front entrance for the photo.

Will smiled up at the dark haired boy and lead them over to the others. Max held the camera out in front of her as the rest of the group filed behind her, grinning. Will snaked his hand over Mike's

shoulders and Eleven draped her arms around Max from behind.

“Cheese!”

“Mike, stop looking at *Will*, look at the camera,” Lucas snapped.

They all laughed as the light flashed.

“I took a few, so you all get a copy.” Max let the film develop for a few seconds and handed them each a photo. Mike took one and before he slid it into his pocket he showed it to Will, both staring at their cheeky grins. He already knew where he’d keep the photo—on the bulletin board in his bedroom, amongst ticket stubs, poems and sketches Will had done, and photos of the group when they were younger; right next to the many polaroids he’d snapped of Will. A collage of his hazel eyes. *His beautiful, bright eyes.*

“Cute, Mikey,” Will whispered. *Was he talking about the picture? Or him?*

Will briefly touched Mike’s shoulder then caught up with the rest of them, leaving him to stare at the smiles on the film, hiding his blush.

7:02 pm

“Boys against girls!”

“How is that fair?” Eleven hissed, “It’s just the two of us.”

“We can join a group that’s already in there,” Will added.

“You’re all such a headache. Let’s just split it into two groups. Me, Mike and Dustin on the red team. Will, Lucas and Eleven on blue. *Deal?*” Max counted off on her fingers.

Mike looked around the area as the others went with their teams and pulled on the correct vests and guns.

“Need some help?” Max asked and went to her girlfriend’s side, she

was holding the gear in her arms with a startled expression like she was handling a bomb. She giggled as Max guided the heavy vest over her head and adjusted it to her small waist. Eleven watched it all in wonder, then looked up at her face.

“*Pretty*,” She said to Max and leaned in for a hug, their pink cheeks pressed close.

“See Will? It’s that simple,” Dustin whispered loudly and then chuckled while he watched the girls. Will punched Dustin in the arm and his eyes quickly met Mike’s from across the neon lit waiting room.

Will was about to say something to him, not in words. In his stare. But the booming voice from the overhead speaker filled the room.

“*Game begins in five*,” The announcer said.

“Alright. I’m going to go with my team. You remember the rules?” Max had her hands on Eleven’s shoulders, staring into her eyes.

Mike tried to make Will look again, but he was talking to Dustin as they headed into a different room. *What was he going to say? What was so simple?*

Eleven pointed to Max’s glowing chest, “Shoot the red vests. Hide. Be quiet.”

“See? You’ll do great,” Max hugged her one last time and went over to the door, “But, I *am* going to win.”

“We’ll see about that, Mad Max.” Lucas shouted and patted their shoulders companionably.

A buzzer sounded as the main doors opened; Mike’s team rushed inside to station themselves around the maze. The arena was pitch black save for the neon lights across the carpeted floor and a constellation of yellow artificial stars on the ceiling. He knew that Will’s team was somewhere on the opposite side, lurking in the shadows. Waiting to stake the perfect moment to strike. The visual made Mike’s heart race and he was drowning in worry.

He could only think of Will. *It's gonna be just like that time at the arcade. Just like Halloween. He's gonna be walking and everything's fine until someone jumps out and it triggers a memory in his mind. What if he can't control it, and the figure in front of him suddenly turns into a Demogorgon? Or the Mind Flayer in his head?*

Mike crept around the curved bend in the maze and quietly ducked into a dark alcove to think. A shout suddenly echoed and floated up into the air, the resonant cry drifting to Mike's ears. To anyone else the sound only meant that someone had gotten caught off guard and a laser to the chest.

What if that's Will? Is he okay?

Mike sat up slowly, hoping to find Will and make sure he was safe; he turned his head around the edge of the alcove and in the sound of slamming plastic someone crashed into him. He staggered back, registering the face.

"Oh. Will, thank God. I was going to see—"

Before he could get out the last of his sentence Will took the barrel of his laser gun and pinned Mike back against the alcove wall.

He couldn't speak.

Mike only watched Will draw his lips up to his mouth, frozen in surprise. Will squeezed the trigger as their lips parted at the same time, as though they'd wanted this from the start. He kissed Will back and shuddered when he felt a brush of those teeth along the front of his flushed lips; Mike dropped his gun and grabbed at his face, embracing the startling sensation when Will pressed himself closer, trapping him. *Oh God, don't move. Don't pull away*, Mike pleaded.

The trigger went off and Mike's vest buzzed and filled the space with flashing red light—but Will didn't let go. He just rooted him in place by the tip of the gun, its weight carrying all throughout the plastic front of his vest and into his pounding heart.

Will sighed into his open mouth, making Mike shudder involuntarily before he moved his body away. The air was filled with the sound of

their shaky breathing.

“*That’s* what I wanted for my birthday,” Mike’s heart sped up at his gruff, breathy voice.

Mike reached for him again, “W-Wait-“

“*Shhh*,” Will whispered and placed his hand on Mike’s face, smirking, “*You’re dead, Wheeler.*”

He rushed out of the alcove with a smile plastered on his face before Mike could run after him. The vest shook once more, signaling his loss, before the color faded and died. Mike slid down onto the floor and brought his fingers to his hot cheeks. His lips started to burn as the last few minutes replayed in his head, making his breathing turn ragged again and his stomach twist back into messy, feverish knots.

Mike felt the pulse roar in his ears, still staring at the empty space where Will was only moments before. Where he’d just kissed him.

What just happened?

8:49 pm

“Our team,” Eleven started, staring hopelessly out the car window into the night, “*Lost.*”

“Yep,” Dustin sighed, “That’s what happens when you’re up against the best.”

Mike ignored their arguing and stared out the back window at the stars. They covered the dark sky, too many to count, thousands of glittering and radiant sparks—they reminded him of Will’s eyes. *So full of amber light and happiness, no matter the circumstance.*

“Hey.” Mike flinched when there was a tap on his shoulder. Any touch from him and Mike turned into a live wire, his lungs forgot how to work and his heart thrashed wildly inside his aching chest. He

longed to let Will's touch linger, to sustain the burning, fluttering sensation.

"Yeah?" He whispered, taking the time to even his breathing before he looked at Will.

His eyes flickered between Mike's, searching his face. "Was that alright?"

"Was *what* alright?"

"Back in the arena..you know.."

Mike's cheeks burned tomato red as he remembered the softness of his lips and quickly murmured, "Oh, yeah. That was *really* nice Will, I just--"

"*What?*" He leaned in, as if getting closer would help to understand. Mike's body tensed at the hurt beginning to show on Will's face.

"It..kinda caught me off guard."

Will paused. "Do you want me to ask you next time? If it's okay?"

Mike nodded.

Will smiled at their bodies, intentionally placed as far apart as possible. "Can I hold your hand?"

He nodded again and Will slipped his hand into Mike's, letting his fingers trail absently along the front of his knuckles.

"Mike, this is your stop," Lucas said from the driver's seat. Will held his hand tighter.

"Could I come too?" Will asked him quietly, "My mom wouldn't mind."

"Of course," Mike hid his red face as he climbed over the back seat to the car door.

"Aight. Happy birthday, Will," Dustin said and waved at the two.

He gave Dustin a shy smile. "Thanks, guys. It was really fun."

"*Don't do anything stupid!*" Max shouted out the window as the van sped away.

They stared at each other for a moment, in the quiet of the night, standing in front of the Wheeler's unlit driveway. Until the front door swung open and Nancy was calling from the porch.

"Guess we better go in then," Mike whispered, caught up in Will's gaze.

He looked away, grinning. "Yeah."

9:02 pm

"There's so many photos here," Will inspected the cork board on Mike's wall. When they'd went inside Mike opened the window above his bed to let the peaceful night sounds in, and allow the stars outside to watch.

"Wait a minute," Will touched a piece of paper tacked on the board, "I drew this."

"I love your art, Will. How could I not hang it up?" Mike smiled up at him, so full of affection. *He's adorable when he's flustered.* Will muttered something under his breath and his face turned pink.

"Oh, *right!*" Mike got off his bed and joined his side. He handed over the Polaroid photo from his pocket, "You can pick the spot to put it up if you want."

Will studied the picture, as if seeing it for the first time. He was close, close enough that Mike could see every detail of his face, see the curve of his lips that had fit so perfectly in his own.

"You're so cute." He pointed to Mike in the photo, then tore a piece of tape to hang the Polaroid next to a small drawing. A pencil sketch of Mike, with a caption at the bottom in Will's handwriting: *my Paladin.*

“Y-you’re uh, pretty cute too,” Mike stammered. When Will finished hanging the picture he turned around and followed him to the bed, his head tipping up so their eyes met. The air suddenly felt very warm as they sat chest to chest—silent except for the crickets outside—until Will spoke softly.

“Mikey, can I ask something?” His hazel eyes never left his face.

Mike didn’t realize he’d been holding his breath.

“Anything.”

Will was leaning back on his hands, and decidedly scooted closer. “Can you..*hold me please?*”

His eyes widened. Will’s request was so *gentle* that it made Mike’s heart burn for him. The desire to have him in his arms. “Of course I will.”

Mike took his hands and wrapped them around his neck, leaning them back on the comforter, drawing him closer than they’d ever been before. Will nestled his cheek to Mike’s chest as he faced the stars out the open window, his legs eased down to rest snug by his sides.

“*Is this okay?*” Will asked, tilting his head up so he could nestle into Mike’s neck. His soft brown hair brushed Mike’s skin and sent goosebumps racing up his arms. He closed his eyes and rubbed Will’s back in comforting circles.

“It’s perfect,” He said.

Will yawned. “This was such a great birthday.”

“Yeah?”

“Duh, I had my first kiss.” Will murmured, his fingers under Mike’s neck started to play with his dark curls.

“Tired?” Mike asked, his hands never leaving his back.

“Only a little,” He replied with a drowsy smile against his chest.

He laughed and put a hand gingerly on Will's face to move a strand of hair. In the minutes that followed he let Will fall asleep while he studied the stars outside, listened to the heartbeat of the boy on top of him, the drawing on the cork-board. The title scrawled beneath.

"My Cleric," Mike whispered to the stars.